

APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

2013 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant: Des Moines Independent Community School District

Application ID: 13AC147255

Program Name: Des Moines Public Schools AmeriCorps

For the purpose of enhancing our programs by improving the quality and quantity of applications to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), we are providing specific feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses of this application. These comments are not meant to represent a comprehensive assessment; rather the analysis represents those elements that had the greatest bearing on the rating of the application. Please note that this feedback consists of summary comments from more than one reviewer. For this reason, some of the comments may seem to be inconsistent or contradictory. Comments are not representative of all of the information used in the final funding decision.

Reviewers' Summary Comments:

(+) The application references research to support risk factors such as attendance, disengagement, and poor academic achievement that may increase a student's likelihood of dropping out. In Des Moines Public Schools (DMPS), 12% of elementary school students, 31% of middle school students, and 53% of high school students have two or more risk factors that may lead to an increase in the dropout rate.

(+) The number of AmeriCorps members in specific slots is described clearly, and the application of the individual Members and placements will be effective based on descriptions of who will do what and when. The applicant describes the role of each of the Members clearly and effectively. The roles are in line with the placement in the schools and supervision.

(+) The application proposes creative evidence-based service learning for students with two or more risk factors, allowing them to use community projects to expand their educational experiences and ultimately improve their academic performance. This component provides a functional platform for at-risk students to incorporate their cultural background, personal interest, and other "real life" realities into their academic tool box.

(-) The applicant states that the Member will tutor about 75 students per week but it is unclear how many times a Member will meet with each student per week. The applicant did not provide sufficient information to evaluate if the interventions provided by tutors will have a significant impact on academic achievement.

(-) It was unclear how full-time summer Members will be utilized in the summer program.